

Congressmen Urge A 'Heavy' Defense Against the Soviet

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Sept. 18—

The Administration's decision to build a "thin" missile defense against Communist China unleashed today an offensive in Congress to build a "heavy" defense system against Soviet missiles.

The announcement that the Administration had decided to proceed with a deployment of a limited Nike X missile system was generally applauded on Capitol Hill, where Congressional leaders had been secretly briefed in advance.

But some generally pro-Administration Democrats applauded the move only as a first step toward construction of a much more costly and complex defense system effective against Soviet missiles.

In announcing the decision in San Francisco, Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara emphasized that the Administration remained firmly opposed to transforming the "light" system into a "heavy" system.

G.O.P. Political Loss

The pressure to make such a transformation is expected to come more from the Administration's own ranks on Capitol Hill than from Republican ranks. Republicans, who privately acknowledged that the Administration had deprived them of a promising campaign issue by its decision, were notably reticent.

The focus of the Congressional pressure is expected to come from the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, which in the past has demonstrated its influence on such issues by pushing the executive branch into development of the hydrogen bomb and construction of atomic submarines.

Within the committee the principal advocates of a more extensive missile defense sys-

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tem are expected to be such Administration supporters as John O. Pastore of Rhode Island, the committee chairman, and Henry M. Jackson of Washington, the chairman of the committee's Subcommittee on Military Applications.

Senator Pastors applauded that Administration's decision as "a step in the right direction," leading to the deployment of "an over-all system against the Soviet Union."

Senator Jackson said that "the problem will not rest with a program directed solely at the Chinese, but must now shift to developing a defense to 'blunt' the Soviet offensive capability."

Committee members were already claiming credit for pushing the administration into its decision. The claim was based on the committee's recent report about the unexpectedly rapid progress being made by Communist China in developing thermonuclear warheads and the missiles to deliver them.

The committee had scheduled hearings on the need to deploy an antiballistic missile system against China, but now the focus of the hearings will turn to the need for a defense against Soviet missiles.

Two Main Concerns

The hearings, to be conducted by Senator Jackson's subcommittee, are scheduled to begin early next month.

As indicated in Senator Jackson's comments today, committee members are particularly concerned about two factors. One is the growing offensive nuclear capability of the Soviet Union. The other factor is the possible psychological reduction in the effectiveness of the American nuclear deterrent if the Soviet Union proceeds with deployment of a defense system while the United States refrains.

Behind these stated concerns is an unstated fear that the Soviet Union, before the limited test ban treaty went into effect in 1963, may have made greater technological progress than the United States in developing missile defense warheads, particularly in developing the use of X-rays from atomic explosions to destroy incoming warheads.

While Administration officials are inclined to dismiss the possibility of developing a effective defense against a large-scale missile attack, some committee members are fearful that the Soviet Union, on the basis of some high-altitude explosions in 1958 and 1962, is convinced it has found a way to develop an effective defense system.

Senator Jackson alluded to these technical concerns within the committee. He said that "despite the appealing notion that technology stands on a plateau and that the 'scientific military revolution' has been 'stabilized, in fact missile technology is advancing in almost all fields of offense and defense — payload, accuracy, guidance, maneuverability and multiple warheads.'"

Division Within Panel

It appeared that there was still some division of opinion within the committee over how far the United States should go in developing a missile defense against the Soviet threat.

Senator Jackson, for the moment at least, was thinking in terms of defending missile sites against attack, while Senator Pastore was talking in terms of the more costly alternative of protecting populations at large.

Senator Clinton P. Anderson, Democrat of New Mexico, was far less emphatic than his colleagues on the committee in pressing for a defense against the Soviet Union.

According to associates, Senator Anderson's concern was that such a defense, costing as much as \$20-billion, would divert funds from domestic programs and the space effort.

Senator Anderson said that the Administration decision "was required to insure our national security, particularly in light of the Communist Chinese nuclear threat." At the same time he expressed regret that attempts to reach a missile limitation agreement with the Soviet Union had proven fruitless.